

Date: 10 July 2020
Our ref: 320326, Case 12827
Your ref: TR010031



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir / Madam

NSIP Reference Name / Code: TR010031: A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme

User Code: A1BC-SP004

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 22 June 2020 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Written Representation

PART I: Summary of Natural England's advice. Natural England has no concerns with regards to impacts on statutorily designated sites, and has issued a Letter of No impediment in relation to European Protected Species.

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Part 1 – Introduction

Part 2 – Conservation Interests

PART 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose and structure of these representations

- 1.1.1. These Written Representations are submitted in pursuance of rule 10(1) of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 ('ExPR') in relation to an application under the Planning Act 2008 for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') for A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme ('the Project') submitted by Highways England ('the Applicant') to the Secretary of State.
- 1.1.2. Natural England has already provided a summary of its principal concerns in its Relevant Representations, submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 12 November 2019, and previous Written Representations on 31 January 2020. This document comprises an updated detailed statement of Natural England's views, as they have developed in view of the common ground discussions that have taken place with the Applicant to date. These are structured as follows:
 - a. Section 2 describes the conservation designations, features and interests that may be affected by the Project and need to be considered.
 - b. Section 3 comprises Natural England's submissions in respect of the issues that concern it.

2. CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS, FEATURES AND INTERESTS THAT COULD BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1. International conservation designations

- a. There are no international conservation designations that could be affected by this proposal.

2.2. National conservation designations

- a. There are no national conservation designations that could be affected by this proposal.

2.3. European Protected Species

- a. The proposal has the potential to impact upon a European Protected Species – Common Pipistrelle Bat. Natural England have worked with the applicants, and their consultants, to ensure that all necessary information has been provided, and a Letter of No Impediment has been issued.

2.4. Nationally Protected Species

- a. There are no nationally protected species likely to be affected by the development, including the proposed additional working area.

2.5. Non-designated interests and features of concern

- a. While there are woodlands adjacent to the scheme that are listed in the Ancient Woodlands Inventory, these are not expected to be affected by the development, including the proposed additional working area.
- b. There is the potential for locally designated sites, including Local Wildlife Sites, to be affected by the proposal. Natural England considers the measures proposed within the Construction Environment Management Plan to address any impacts to be appropriate.

3. NATURAL ENGLAND'S CONCERNS AND ADVICE

3.1 The principal issue

3.1.1. Natural England identified the following main issues in its Relevant Representations:

a. Potential impacts on European Protected Species (roosting Common Pipistrelle bats)

These issues will be discussed in corresponding sections below along with any updates on the progress or resolution of issues.

3.2. Impacts on European Protected Species

3.2.1. Protected species surveys identified the presence of roosting common pipistrelle bats on the Eighton Lodge South Underbridge. Since Natural England provided our Relevant Representations, and previous Written Representations to this proposal, WSP (Ecological consultants for Highways England) have submitted further information to support the draft Protected Species Licence submission. Natural England has assessed this information, and has issued a Letter of No Impediment.

3.3. Conclusions

3.3.1 Based on the information provided, Natural England is satisfied that all environmental impacts resulting from the proposal, including the proposed extended working area, can be adequately addressed to ensure no residual impacts arise from the development.